

OVERSIGHT HEARING ON COMMITTEE OF SCIENTISTS—NATIONAL FOREST PLANNING

OVERSIGHT HEARING BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON FOREST AND FOREST HEALTH OF THE COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES ONE HUNDRED SIXTH CONGRESS FIRST SESSION

MARCH 16, 1999, WASHINGTON, DC

Serial No. 106–15

Printed for the use of the Committee on Resources



Available via the World Wide Web: <http://www.access.gpo.gov/congress/house>
or
Committee address: <http://www.house.gov/resources>

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

56–355 =

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OVERSIGHT HEARING ON COMMITTEE OF SCIENTISTS—NATIONAL FOREST PLANNING

TUESDAY, MARCH 16, 1999

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON FORESTS AND
FOREST HEALTH,
COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES,
Washington, DC.

The Subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:50 p.m., in Room 1334, Longworth, Hon. Helen Chenoweth [chairwoman of the Subcommittee] presiding.

STATEMENT OF HON. HELEN CHENOWETH, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF IDAHO

Mrs. CHENOWETH. The Committee on Forests and Forests health will come to order.

The Subcommittee is meeting today to hear testimony on the Committee of Scientists' National Forest planning. Under rule 4(g) of the Committee rules, any oral opening statements at hearings are limited to the chairman and the Ranking Minority Member. This will allow us to hear from our witnesses sooner and help other members keep to their schedules. Therefore, if other members have statements, they can be included in the hearing record under unanimous consent.

Today the Subcommittee on Forests and Forest Health convenes to hear from the administration's Committee of Scientists, which was chartered by Secretary Glickman in 1997 to recommend changes to the Forest Service's land and resource management planning process. The agency itself initiated a critique of its planning process in the late 1980's and began drafting new regulations to improve and streamline its procedures shortly thereafter. Its goal was to develop new procedures before it was time to begin revising its 10-year management plans.

Unfortunately, the new planning regulations never saw the light of day. After many delays, this administration appointed a Committee of Scientists to develop recommendations for the Forest Service to follow. Now, originally due in March or April of last year, then in September, then planned for release in February, the report was finally released yesterday.

Based on a preliminary review of the administration's committee of Scientists' report, I am struck with mixed feelings. Now, while the Committee has, obviously, put a lot of hard work and thinking into this document, I still can't help but feel that the committee's recommendations are a recipe for the status quo, which means a

continuation of gridlock, red tape, continued controversy, and more difficult plan implementation with fewer on-the-ground results.

But, despite its good intentions, the committee's recommendations do not resolve a number of problems that have been identified since the Forest Service first conducted its critique. The 1982 regulations focus largely on the development, amendment, and revision of plans, but provide no direction for plan implementation. Forest plans are not based on realistic budgets, so the Forest Service is unable to fully implement them and adequately monitor the results. The public involvement procedures have not reduced the level of controversy over plan decisions. The "viability provisions" in the 1982 regulations have proven difficult to implement, setting a higher standard than the Endangered Species Act, and going beyond the intent and meaning of the diversity requirement in the National Forest Management Act. Appeals and litigation have greatly increased the time and cost of planning, both for forest plans and for projects designed to implement the plans, without substantially altering Forest Service decisions.

While I am disappointed with the overall results, I believe some of the committee's recommendations really have merit, particularly the proposals to set up experiments and pilot projects across the country to try different approaches, to keep decisions close to the planning area, and the report's emphasis on adaptive management.

Already Congress has passed, and even the administration has agreed to implement, some very positive pilot projects on national forest land. The Quincy Library Group bill originated in this very Subcommittee, and it is a great example of what local people can accomplish when they work together. The administration has also set a positive precedent by allowing expedited processes to be used in Texas for removing a blow-down salvage. In addition, I will be working with leaders in my own State of Idaho to implement a pilot project where Idaho can manage specific portions of national forest land.

With these positive steps in mind, I am particularly looking forward to hearing how the recommendations of the Committee of Scientists address the use of pilot projects, and how they will ensure that the decisions are locally based.

Following the first panel, the Subcommittee will receive a report by a task group of the Nation's professional foresters. Their report on public land management laws provides a different view of the problems and solutions that are needed to resolve the Forest Service's current forest planning gridlock.

And, finally, we will hear from two witnesses who have closely followed the deliberations of the administration's Committee of Scientists, and will offer their views on how to improve national forest planning.

Now, I look forward to hearing from our panelists and reviewing these reports in more detail. Because I agree with the importance of using sound scientific principles in reaching forest management decisions, I would appreciate the witnesses' thoughts on the need for an independent scientific peer review of any of the recommendations that are presented today.

And, when the Ranking Minority Member comes in, should he wish, I would be happy to recognize him at that time for a statement.

Now I would like to introduce our first panel: Mr. Jim Lyons, the Under Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment, Department of Agriculture; Mr. Mike Dombeck, Chief of the U.S. Forest Service, and Dr. K. Norman Johnson, Chairman of the Committee of Scientists from Corvallis, Oregon.

Dr. Johnson, I know you have others of your committee who are sitting behind you and, I wonder if you might, at this time, introduce them, please.

STATEMENT OF JAMES R. LYONS, UNDER SECRETARY, NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Dr. JOHNSON. Thank you. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

As you said, I am Norm Johnson, College of Forestry, OSU, and I teach forest management and policy. And, with your permission, I will turn it over here and I will ask each of them to introduce themselves, if that is okay.

Mr. AGEE. I am James Agee, College of Forest Resources, University of Washington, Seattle.

Mr. LONG. James Long, Utah State University.

Mr. TROSPER. Ron Trospen, Northern Arizona University, Flagstaff, Arizona.

Mr. BESCHTA. Bob Beschta, Oregon State University, Corvallis.

Dr. SEDJO. Roger Sedjo, Resources for the Future, here in Washington.

Ms. DALE. Virginia Dale, Oak Ridge National Laboratory in Tennessee.

Ms. SHANNON. Margaret Shannon, State University of New York at Buffalo, part of the environment institute in the school there.

Dr. NOON. Barry Noon, Colorado State University.

Mr. WILKINSON. Charles Wilkinson, University of Colorado.

Ms. WONDOLLECK. Julia Wondolleck, University of Michigan.

Mrs. CHENOWETH. Well, I want to welcome all of you to the hearing and it is an honor, indeed, and a pleasure to have these distinguished men and women with us today.

And, as explained in our first hearing, it is the intention of the chairman to place all of our outside witnesses under oath. Now, this is a formality of the Committee that is meant to assure open and honest discussion, and should not affect the testimony given by the witnesses. And, I believe that all of the witnesses were informed of this before appearing here today, and they have each been provided a copy of the Committee rules. So, now, if you will please stand and raise your right hand, I will administer the oath. [Witnesses sworn.]

The chairman now recognizes Mr. Lyons for his testimony.

Mr. LYONS. Thank you very much, Madam Chairman. It is a pleasure to be with you again this afternoon. I guess I would, first, ask that my complete statement be offered for the record and entered in the record, and I would simply summarize.

I know really the focus of the hearing today is to hear from Chairman Johnson of the committee, and the members of the com-

mittee. But, I thought what I would offer today is an attempt to try to put things in context.

You have already alluded to the 1995 rules and decision not to move forward with those rules. I thought I would offer some thoughts on that—on the valuable contributions that the committee's report provides us in terms of our goal of finally preparing a final set of rules for forest planning; then maybe just highlight a couple of the key provisions as I see them.

First of all, I want to emphasize, as you know very well, forest planning and, in fact, forest planning rules have been fraught with controversy from the very beginning. After the enactment of the National Forest Management Act in 1976, Forest Service set about preparing rules to guide forest planning, in accordance with section 6 of the RPA, which NFMA amended. Now, those rules were completed in 1979, but, in fact, no forest plan was ever completed under those rules. As he entered office as a part of the Reagan Administration, one of my predecessors, Assistant Secretary John Crowell, elected to pull those rules back and to take a new look at forest planning rules. At that time, Doug McCleary was his deputy.

They reviewed rules and the controversy over their efforts to attempt to revise the rules to conform with what they thought would provide proper direction led to reconvening of the Committee of Scientists, which had been originally convened to prepare the 1979 rules. The 1982 rules finally did go in place and, of course, all the forest plans that had been prepared, amended, and as you indicated, litigated, since that time, have been done so under the 1982 guiding rules. So, it has been some time since we have revisited the basic rules that guide forest planning.

When I first took office, one of the bundles of paper on my desk was a proposal from the Bush Administration to amend forest planning rules. I elected to review those rules and decided not to proceed, but, in fact, worked with Forest Service in preparation of the draft rules that were issued in 1995. In part, as a result of response to those rules and criticism from all sides about some of the substance of changes that were proposed—as well as some of the things we were learning—as the administration in moving forward with implementing new policy and management direction, lessons learned from the President's Northwest Forest Plan, from the Columbia River Basin effort, which you are well aware of, from implementing the salvage rider, and from working to try to prove the implementation of the Endangered Species Act, we found that there were a number of new lessons, and perhaps some new guidance, that should be incorporated into new planning direction.

Therefore, we decided, instead of moving forward with the 1995 rules, to establish a Committee of Scientists to take a fresh look at forest planning and the rulemaking that guides forest planning. In fact, in December 1997, as you pointed out, Secretary Glickman chartered and appointed the committee that is here before you today, and presented this report to Secretary Glickman on Monday.

I think it is important to note that this is an extremely diverse committee, selected so as to represent the breadth of expertise and experiences we thought were essential to understanding the issues that are associated with forest planning and to help create a new foundation, if you will, for forest planning and management direc-

tion for the future. And, so, the individuals that just introduced themselves represent a wide range of areas of expertise from forest ecologists and silvaculturists, to economists, to a lawyer, to a sociologist, range ecologist, landscape background and experience, as well as extensive experience in other areas of ecology, such as animal ecology.

We thought it was an extremely valuable team, and I think the product of their efforts are really outstanding. I think it does provide us a very valuable foundation for the work that we need to proceed with.

The report that was presented to the Secretary, that we will discuss today, I would say, in a phrase, is elegantly simple in the direction it provides and the message it sends. And, that is simply this: We need to work in a way that better integrates science and policy in decisionmaking processes, working from regional ecological assessments to create a foundation, if you will, to guide resource management. In using the scientific information available, we should work with our public, with interested parties, with our colleagues, and other agencies, to help develop a desired future condition that provides some set of goals and objectives for forest management direction. We should then use that desired future condition to guide implementation of forest management policies and specific management actions and measure our managers' performance by how well they implement actions to help move us toward that desired future condition, a condition that has, hopefully, been developed and agreed upon by the community of interest in a particular national forest or region of the country.

At the same time, we should monitor performance to ensure that we are getting the results we intended, and, in so doing, make corrections, as necessary, in the vein of adaptive management, a concept that we have discussed many times and, of course, a concept that former Chief Jack Thomas was instrumental in helping to put in place.

Some key elements in the report that I think are worthy of focusing on are these: First of all, the report emphasizes that fact that ecological sustainability should be a foundation for the management of the national forest. In fact, the committee's report summarizes that concept in this way: The committee recommends that ecological sustainability provide a foundation upon which the management for national forests and grasslands can contribute to economic and social sustainability. And, I think, the key there, Madam Chairman, is the linkage between ecological sustainability and the social and economic sustainability of the communities that you and I care very much about across the United States, the emphasis on larger landscapes.

I think what we have learned from our work in those regions of the country—I mentioned previously the Northwest, the Columbia River Basin, the Sierra, the Appalachians—emphasizing collaboration and the need for agencies to work together. I think we have come to recognize—we have discussed in this hearing room many times—the extent to which other agencies, given the jurisdiction and authority they have in implementing statutes like the Endangered Species Act and the Clean Water Act, and others, certainly impact how we implement planning. And, working with those agen-

cies upfront is important in a collaborative vein, a focus on desired future conditions not devised, simply by the foresters in charge of individual national forests, but devised through partnership and dialogue with interested parties, with the public, with commercial interests that are impacted by the use of these national forests, and by those who may not live in an area proximate to a national forest, but certainly have a vested interest in this forest. Monitoring, which the committee highlights as an essential element of stewardship, I think is the key to ensuring that we are actually getting the results that we seek, and I think it is the key to responding to the concerns that you, and other Members of Congress, have raised with regard to our ability to be accountable for the investments we make and the resource decisions that we implement. Encouraging citizen participation throughout the planning process is another critical element and area of special emphasis.

As highlighted in the committee's report, watersheds are given particular focus, which I think, in some manner of speaking, helps to validate some of the focus that the Forest Service is providing on watersheds as well as other elements of what we refer to as the Forest Service's natural resource agenda. Most importantly, the recommendation that we measure performance based on our ability to move towards that desired future condition that is established on a landscape.

Let me explain, very briefly, Madam Chairman, how we hope to use the information that has been generated by the committee. In brief, we have been working on a parallel track with the committee in establishing a planning team to begin the process of revising and developing new planning rules—that track, largely with the recommendations of the committee. We have worked from earlier drafts of the report, shared information, which, of course, has been available to the public-at-large through the website that was established. The committee—in fact, I know the committee staff—has participated in several of the FACA meetings that were held by the committee.

We have used this information to begin the process of developing rules which we hope we can issue in draft this spring, with the intent of moving forward, receiving public comment, making improvements and modifications to respond to that comment, and hopefully, completing the rules by the end of this year.

I want to address one other issue, Madam Chairman, if I could, that I know will be a focus of discussion as this debate over the future of forest planning evolves. And that is the issue of the statutory foundation for forest management in this day and age. Some have argued, in fact, that the laws that guide the management of the national forests are broken. In fact, some will argue that the committee's report provides new direction for forest management.

I would argue quite the opposite, Madam Chairman, as you might expect. I would argue that, in fact, the statutory foundation for management of the national forests is quite sound, and that this report really, in fact, simply reaffirms direction that has been the "standing order," if you will, for management of the national forests for nearly a century.

In fact, if I could—and I would ask that this be entered into the record—I have with me a letter that was sent by former Secretary

James Wilson, Secretary of Agriculture, to Gifford Pinchot in 1905, nearly a century ago, which really provided the initial direction for management of the forest reserves as they were transferred to the U.S. Department of Agriculture for administration.

I think, the most salient point in the letter from Secretary Wilson to Chief Pinchot was the following: The Secretary noted and directed that, where conflicting interest must be reconciled, the question will always be decided from the standpoint of the greatest good of the greatest number in the long run—I think arguing for the need to, not only deal with the concerns and issues of the present, but look to the long term in a sustainable way. In fact, Gifford Pinchot, in his autobiography “Breaking New Ground,” which I know you have, made note of the Secretary’s letter and proudly said, of the letter, in the four decades between the time the letter was written and Pinchot wrote his autobiography—this letter has set the standard for the service, and it is still being quoted as the essence of Forest Service policy.

I would argue, Madam Chairman, that in the six decades since Pinchot wrote these words, that direction contained in the original letter from Secretary Wilson to Gifford Pinchot still stands. I believe the committee’s report simply reaffirms that direction.

Let me close, Madam Chairman, by emphasizing something that I think the committee brought forth that is an extremely important point, and that is, over the years—and you are well aware of this—the Forest Services lost some credibility with the public, credibility with the communities we serve, maybe even credibility with the Congress, and our colleagues. The committee argues that there are ways in which we can begin to build or rebuild the credibility in partnership with that larger community of interest. In fact, the community argues that, by engaging the public in a dialogue about the use of their national forests, we can accomplish that larger goal of rebuilding credibility.

As you know, Madam Chairman, forest planning has become an exercise that generates documents like these. And, actually this is one document in a pile that is about this tall, but it is sad to bring up—I didn’t have the strength to bring it all up here today. We put the public through an exercise of attempting to review these documents and respond to us, not in a collaborative way, but almost in a responsive way. I think that has lent itself to impacting the public’s trust in us and the public’s acceptance of the direction we provide.

To the contrary, I think our goal should be to engage the public in the management of their national forests, and, in fact, it is highlighted on the inside cover of the committee’s report. Pinchot made the same argument back in 1907, again, nearly a century ago, when he said that national forests are made for and owned by the people; they should also be managed by the people. They are made not to give the officers in charge of them a chance to work out theories, but to give the people who use them, and those who are affected by the use, a chance to work out their own best profit. This means that, if national forests are going to accomplish anything worthwhile, the people must know all about them and must take an active part in their management.

And, I think you would agree that is very true, Madam Chairman, that we need to translate forest planning, policy, and management direction in ways in which the public can understand it and become actively engaged in deciding whether or not this direction we provide is consistent with their goals and wishes. In fact, we need to engage the public in a joint effort in deciding what the desired future condition for these national assets should, in fact, be.

The committee highlighted this point in their report, they said, "People find it difficult to support what they do not understand. Further, few people have time for in-depth analysis," and they are referring to documents like this. The Forest Service must make a far greater effort to explain these policies in an understandable manner to the people who own these lands.

I think, Madam Chairman, the committee has done us all a tremendous favor in reviewing past analysis and reviews of forest planning; in looking at the comments received from the public on past planning proposals; in fact, reviewing the internal critiques that you reference in your statement; in providing us a very sound foundation that should guide us in revising, what really amounts to, our planning technology so that we are better prepared and able to prepare plans that are responsive to, in effect, incorporate the public's views in a much greater way in the future than we did in the past.

The committee makes a recommendation, specifically, with regard to how we should measure performance, in fact, that I think will help us as well. The committee said, quote, "Past planning, which often focused on timber harvest and the allowable cut, tended to polarize people in groups. Planning that focuses on desired future conditions and outcomes and the activities to achieve them, on the other hand, gives the Forest Service the best chance to unify people on the management on the national forests."

I hope, Madam Chairman, as we work together on planning direction and these new rules, that we, in fact, can be unified in our commitment to attempt to get these rules finalized and out there as quickly as possible, so that our forest managers and, most importantly, the public we want to encourage to become engaged in this planning process, understand the rules under which they are to operate—and, more importantly, are encouraged to be more involved in deciding the future management of their national forests.

With that, Madam Chairman, I want to thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Lyons may be found at the end of the hearing.]

Mrs. CHENOWETH. Thank you, Mr. Lyons, for your excellent testimony.

The Chair recognizes Mr. Dombeck.

STATEMENT OF MIKE DOMBECK, CHIEF, U.S. FOREST SERVICE

Mr. DOMBECK. Thank you, Madam Chairman, Mr. Sherwood. It is a pleasure to be here to speak with you today about a very important topic.

And, it is also an honor for me to be here with our distinguished Committee of Scientists. I want to publicly thank Chairman John-

son and Dr. Virginia Dale for leading this effort through to completion, as well as the entire committee that has put a lot of hard work into this.

I will be brief. I would like to ask that my entire statement be entered into the recordbook.

I think we all believe that the national forests of the richest country in the world be a model for how human communities can live in productive harmony with the land that sustains us generation after generation. But, yet, so much of the debate over natural resources today seems to focus on things which we disagree about. And, yet, I am sure you and I will agree that there is more common ground for us to walk as we chart a course toward sustainability.

After many months of work, the Committee of Scientists report illustrates that there are many similarities in the various perspectives of how to manage our national forests and grasslands. We all share the belief that we cannot allow any single use of these lands to diminish long-term productivity. The land's ability to support communities depends on taking care of the land's health, diversity, and productivity. And, this certainly is consistent with a multiple-use, sustained-yield mandate.

To achieve this balance, we must build capacity for stewardship among communities of place as well as communities of interest. The best available science from all sources must be used to help identify options for decisions on the landscape. Additionally, we would all likely agree that continued multiple-use management of our national forests and grasslands is appropriate.

We also agree that multiple use doesn't mean every use on every acre. And, as Jim has mentioned, the American people are less concerned about the encyclopedic size of environmental impact statements and phone book size forest plans than they are about the results on the land. The results that they care about are: clean water, healthy forests, healthy watersheds, wildlife habitats, stable soils, recreation opportunities. This is the essence of the Forest Service's natural resource agenda. Combined with the recommendations of the Committee of Scientists, we will craft a new set of planning regulations that better meets the expectations of the citizen-owners of the public lands.

As stewards of the public trusts, we know that our forests and grasslands will confer economic, social, and other benefits on people and communities nationwide so long as we manage them in a way that maintains their health, diversity, and long-term productivity. Forest planning is the pathway to achieving that end result.

Based upon the Committee of Scientists' recommendations, ecological sustainability will lay a critical foundation for fulfilling the intent of the laws and regulations guiding public use and enjoyment of the national forests and grasslands.

And, I want to say upfront that the Forest Service mission is clear and always has been. If we manage the land in a sustainable manner, over the long term it will take care of us generation after generation. And, I believe that is a common goal that we all share.

Thank you, Madam Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Dombeck may be found at the end of the hearing.]

Mrs. CHENOWETH. Thank you, Chief. I appreciate your good testimony.

And, now the Chair recognizes Dr. Johnson. I want to especially welcome you to the Committee. You are from my home State, and I was raised in Grants Pass and admire the university, the Oregon State University. Welcome.

**STATEMENT OF K. NORMAN JOHNSON, CHAIRMAN,
COMMITTEE OF SCIENTISTS**

Dr. JOHNSON. Well, thank you, Madam Chairman.

Our committee was convened in December of 1997 by the Secretary of Agriculture, as you have said, and we were given an assignment to recommend how to best accomplish sound resource planning within the established framework of environmental laws and within the statutory mission of the Forest Service. We were asked to suggest a planning framework that could last a generation, and that is what we have tried to do.

In our approach, we met around the country with Forest Service employees, representatives of tribes, States, and local governments, related Federal natural resource agencies, and members of the public.

We found many, many creative ideas being expressed by both the Forest Service and members of the public about how to improve planning. And, much of our recommendations, many of them reflect what we learned. I am going to summarize, very briefly, the 10 or 12 major recommendations that we have.

No. 1, recognize sustainability as the overarching objective of national forest stewardship. The national forests and grasslands constitute an extraordinary national legacy created by people of vision and preserved for future generations by diligent and farsighted public servants and citizens. They are the people's lands, emblems of our democratic traditions. And, we have named our report, which has just come out, "Sustaining the People's Lands."

The committee believes that sustainability, in all its facets—ecological, economic, and social—should be the guiding star for stewardship of the national forests and grasslands.

Looking back across the century, a suite of laws, starting with the Organic Act of 1897, call for Federal agencies to pursue sustainability. Thus, for the past 100 years, we, as a Nation, have been attempting to define what we mean by "sustainability," in part through our grand experiment in public land management. In the process, we have broadened our focus from that of sustaining commodity outputs to that of sustaining ecological processes and a wide variety of goods, services, conditions, and values. The concept of sustainability is old; its interpretation and redefinition in this report should be viewed as a continuation of the attempt by Gifford Pinchot and others to articulate the meaning of "conservation" and "conservative use" of the precious lands and waters known as the national forests and grasslands.

Recommendation two is that ecological sustainability is a necessary foundation for stewardship. The committee recommends that ecological sustainability provide a foundation upon which the management of the national forests and grasslands can contribute to economic and social sustainability.

This is where planning should start—by ensuring that we retain and restore the ecological sustainability of watersheds, forest and range lands for present and future generations so they can continue to provide benefits to society.

This recommendation does not mean that the Forest Service is expected to maximize environmental protection to the exclusion of other human uses and values, rather, it means that planning, for multiple use and sustained yield, should operate within a baseline level of ensuring the sustainability of ecological systems.

The committee believes that conserving habitat for native species and the productivity of ecological systems remains the surest path to maintaining ecological sustainability. To accomplish this task, the committee suggests a three-part strategy, and we have drafted regulatory language to help the Secretary understand how the strategy will be converted from concept to application. With the committee's recommendations, choices in management still remain about the level of risk.

Recommendation three, economic and social sustainability—contributing to the well-being of people today and tomorrow—is a fundamental purpose of the national forests. Conservation and management of the national forests and grasslands can promote sustainability by providing for a wide variety of uses, values, products, and services, and by enhancing society's capability to make sustainable choices. Included in this effort should be the recognition of the interdependence of forest and grasslands with economies and communities; many communities depend on the national forests and grasslands for much of their economic, social, and cultural sustenance—as those of us who live in Oregon know.

Although, the Forest Service cannot singlehandedly sustain economies and communities, the national forests and grasslands, nevertheless, contribute many valued services, outputs, and uses that allow these economies and communities to persist, prosper, and evolve. Within a context of sustaining ecological systems, planning must take generous account of compelling local circumstances. In addition, local communities have much to offer in terms of the entrepreneurship and people to undertake the treatments that will be needed to sustain the forests.

Recommendation four, consider the larger landscapes in which the national forests and grasslands are located to understand their role in achieving sustainability. That is, planning should look outward. In the past—and I was part of the planning effort in region 6 in the late 1980's—planning tended to look inward, with each national forest treated somewhat as an island to provide all the goods and services. We feel that now planning should look outward and recognize the special role the national forests and grasslands play in regional landscapes.

Five, to build stewardship capacity and use a collaborative approach to planning. Basically, this is getting everybody into the tent from the beginning to assess resource conditions and trends as joint public-scientific inquiries; to work with other public and private organizations toward a sustainable future; to address all Federal lands within the area and work, to the degree feasible, with all affected Federal agencies; to undertake coordinated Federal planning.

Six, to make decisions at the spatial scale of the issue or problem. To have a hierarchical approach to planning, developing overall guidance for sustainability for bio-regions and undertaking strategic planning of large landscapes for long-term goals and project-level planning for small landscapes. And, as you mentioned in your opening remarks, we advocate an adaptive-planning approach where we learn from planning with experiments and pilots.

Seven, use the integrated land and resource plan as an accumulation of planning decisions at all levels and as an administrative vehicle for plan implementation; to make these "loose-leaf" plans dynamic and evolving, reflecting the outcomes of adaptive management; and to support local management flexibility, which we feel is essential to effective planning, with independent field review.

No. 8, to make "desired future conditions" and the outcomes associated with them the central reference points for planning.

No. 9, to make effective use of scientific and technical analysis and review, including developing scientifically credible conservation strategies.

No. 10, to integrate budget realities into planning. Last time we approached planning more in the "field of dreams" approach, with the notion being that: "build a plan and the money will come." Well, the money didn't come, at least not in total, and we feel that we should set long-term goals, considering likely budgets, and acknowledge that actual budgets affect the rate of progress.

Eleven, we provided special guidance on watershed and timber supply, traditional focuses of the Forest Service in achieving sustainability that included a six-part strategy for conserving and restoring watersheds—which, I won't go into detail, but we have on our summary.

And, next, on timber, to recognize the role of timber harvest in achieving sustainability; to recognize the need for predictable timber supplies and how adherence to sustainability increases long-term predictability; and to focus on desired conditions and the actions needed to produce these conditions, including timber harvest, in planning, budgeting, monitoring, and performance evaluation—to focus on desired conditions, and the actions needed to produce them, all the way from planning through implementation, through budgeting. We also acknowledge external influences on collaborative planning and stewardship and suggest developing a consistent approach across Federal agencies for addressing protests and appeals.

Finally, to assist the Secretary in writing/planning the regulations, the committee has summarized these recommendations into a set of purposes, goals, and principles, which can serve as the statement of purpose at the beginning of the regulations.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Johnson may be found at the end of the hearing.]

Mrs. CHENOWETH. Thank you very much, Dr. Johnson.

And, the Chair now would like to step out of order just a little bit and recognize the Ranking Minority Member for any statements he might have, Mr. Smith.

Mr. SMITH. I don't have an opening statement at this point. I will go ahead and ask a question as we move around.